

THE JOURNAL

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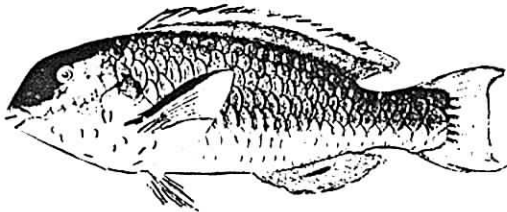
No. 25

December 14 1987

Atiu- Cook Islands

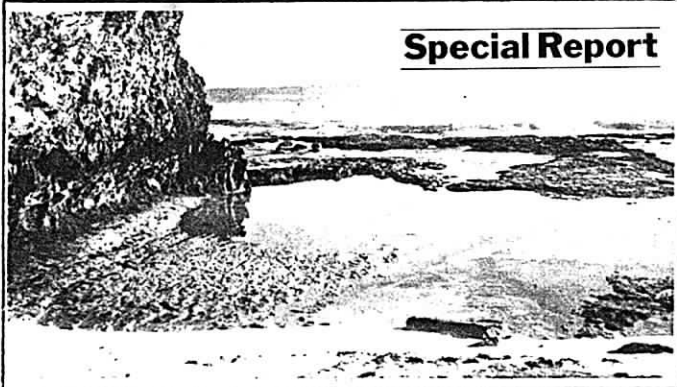
EDITORIAL

DEATH ON THE REEF



The sweet, white flesh of the popular parrot fish (above) is tainted with death and the hot bare reef of Atiu

Special Report



is a place of fear and suspicion as the infamous "red tide" threatens to destroy food and livelihood on another Nga Pu Toro reef. REPORT INSIDE.

PARLIAMENT **P3**
Poor performance by government

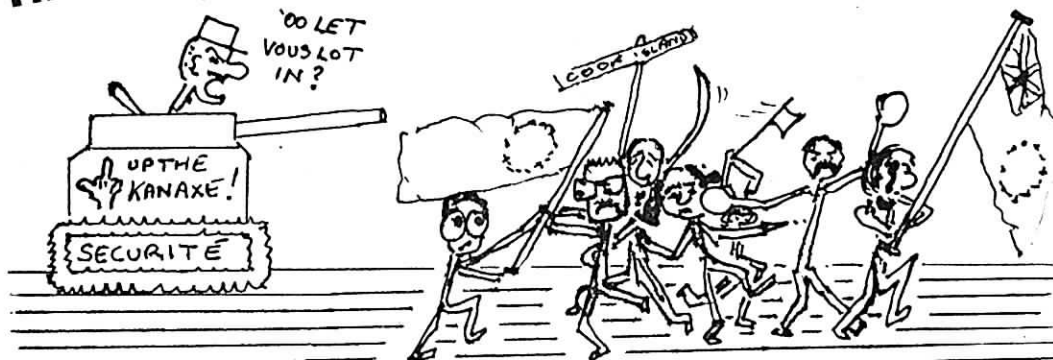
THE RETREATING SOCIAL SERVICE AND THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC SERVANTS

\$750000

Minister
Matepi -
"enquiring.."

Minister
George -
"indignant.."

The Sour Political Games



OATH OF ALLEGIANCE: We swear to make up our own rules, run in all different directions, compete unfairly and at all times act in the spirit of total professionalism for maximum financial reward - in honour of us!

Editorial December 14 1987

GENEVA:
Reservations Clerk,
Hotel Developo.
Midnight.

Res. CLERK: Right staff...emergency stations!

SHOP STEWARD (Presidential Suite Cleaners' Union): This is after hours. Not yet under negotiated terms (blowing whistle) All Out!

Res. CLERK: But this is a very special emergency, folks.

SHOP STEWARD: No emergency is special enough to breach

statutory industrial terms of service.

Res. CLERK: But we have just received word from Rarotonga! Monte Carlo's closed by fog and this week's jumboful of public servants have nowhere to land.

SHOP STEWARD: Rarotonga? Why didn't you say so before. You know our policy towards regulars. Quick lads...14 Presidential Suites. 98 caviar salads and 117 topless hostesses...at the double.

"No, but seriously

Minister Norman George was indignant when he released figures to the JOURNAL on public servants' travel expenditure.

"People are always nailing the Ministers about travel," he said, "what is not sufficiently publicised is the fact that the public servants' bill for travel is \$750,000...and rising!"

There will be those who will seek to use the travel issue as a populist and cheap stick with which to belabour government.

We prefer the rational stance of an avowed supporter of Mr. Ingram:

"I have no problem with Ministers or public servants travelling for the good of the country. We all know it is necessary. What I demand to see published, however, is a clear statement prior to departure of exactly

why it is in the country's interests for a trip to be made and, immediately on return an itemised account of what has been gained for the country. We also want to know how much each one has received to make the trip. Then we can all do our private sums and decide whether it is worthwhile."

The country is entitled to no less than shareholders demand from a good board.

Mr. George's indignation is shared by many who see the current state of the nation's social services and wonder what has been achieved after \$750,000 worth of overseas travel...and rising.

Public Relations are called for. Otherwise those called upon to travel in the interests of the nation get the same abuse as the "bludgers" and professional tripsters.

”

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Coalition 3 unravels and frays at the edges as Government members pay for inadequacies with a battering from the opposition. A "Big Four" emerges. Mr. Ingram's best week yet.

ECONOMICS —8— \$ BUSINESS

In a rare series of interviews some of the Cook Islands leading commercial figures open up on politics and business. A JOURNAL first.

10—LIVING

The Atiu reef joins that of Mitiaro as a potential death trap for the unwary.

VERA —13—

A four page special covering all the news at home and abroad.

THE JOURNAL

P.O. ATIU, Cook Islands



"Get to know the
REAL Cook Islands"

a national publication.

The JOURNAL is a weekly review of the Cook Islands and the world from a Cook Island and Pacific Regional standpoint.

All views expressed are totally independent and are representative of no one political party or faction.

(The Journal gratefully acknowledges the management assistance given by Mr & Mrs Malcolm of ANL and Atiu Motel - Your Perfect Holiday Spot!)

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EDITOR: David Lewis

POLITICS

In very simple win-loss terms the Coalition Government of Puke (Dr. Who?) Robati appeared to receive last week in Parliament the biggest shellacking of its brief executive life.

It was, all in all, a thoroughly bad week for the Coalition.

Few governments of the day have appeared quite so inept in the face of a week long opposition assault.

Time and time again a degree of Government credibility was retained only by the intervention of Mr. George and Mr. Matepi.

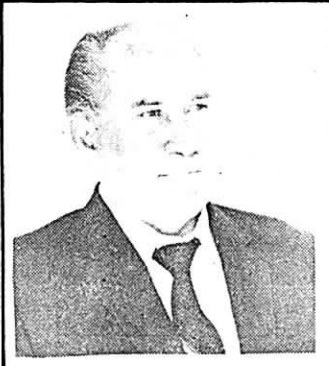
Once more, government's canoe was pilotless with "Dr. Who" Robati either flailing for his life overboard in the deep waters of the Copra Board Affair or waving a drowning point of order in the direction of chief helmsman of the week, Mr. Ingram.

PERFORMANCE

As suggested, government honours of the week went to Mr. Matepi and Mr. George.

Without them, Government's performance might have gone

down on record as among the most inept defences of government performance. Hansard has recorded in 22 years.



Leader of the House William Cowan MP (Matavera)

Low points in the offerings from the government benches ranged from the distinctly disturbing failure of the PM and Mr. Toma to respond adequately to allegations involving the affairs of the Copra Board to the utterly laughable explanation for electricity failures by EPS Minister Ngatupuna David. ("God gave us bodies that break down and need a rest and machines are the same..." or words to that effect and worth a steady D- at Cook Islands School Certificate Level!)

In between times we had House Leader William Cowan's preposterous explanation for guillotining the ever-embarrassing Shipping Report. (Mr. Cowan's curious statement that "people" had asked him to cut the debate short appeared as self-serving as it was insulting to the many "people" we contacted who were very keen to have the debate continue for as long as it

Focus ON

THE HOUSE

In our coverage of the current Parliamentary session (the first in which Coalition 3 places its record before the House), we have so far examined closely the enactment of a significant bill from its presentation, through its passage in debate and its final emergence as a piece of legislation. This week, we turn from the legislation itself (which will be examined in more detail with the publication of Hansard) to the legislators and their performance in Parliament via the medium which brings them into every home in the land - radio.

ation for guillotining the ever-embarrassing Shipping Report. (Mr. Cowan's curious statement that "people" had asked him to cut the debate short appeared as self-serving as it was insulting to the many "people" we contacted who were very keen to have the debate continue for as long as it

took to receive an adequate reply from the Northern Groupers as to what they were up to with the "TIMO".

Resolutely and valiantly on cue to bail out the government vaka as it shipped gallon after megagallon of critical

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

the 9 u o r u m s

(AN EVERYDAY TALE OF POLITICAL FOLK) t r o p o



(ctd...from Page 3)

POLITICS

storm water came the members for One-roa and Areora

Mr. Matepi has always been one of the sharpest of back-benchers as well as, with Mr. Henry, the most knowledgeable in the House on procedure. He has a quick mind, a ready wit and an outstanding command of English and Maori.

He needed the full range of his talents during the week to rescue government from the mess left by its lightweights.

It has always been regretted that, in the past, he has been used by a succession of governments as resident "performing flea". He is worth much more and, in the handling to date of his Education portfolio, is currently offering strong credibility as a Minister.



Hon. Matepi Matepi
Minister of Education
(One-roa)

Last week, though, he had to perform every role left vacant from rational ideologue to round-house thug to back alley knifer. On his feet again and again, he was effective in every role and even, towards the end of the week, inflicted the only points defeat of the rampaging Mr. Ingram. (The latter had, rather unwisely, over-reached even his practised ability to "clobber" government by venturing into the complexities of Manganian customary law...against Matepi! Mr. Ingram's confidence knows no bounds!)

As it turned out, Mr. Matepi's Manganian 100% nailed Mr. Ingram's 25% at the end of a close fought exchange.

Mr. Matepi is rumored to be in a spot of bother in One-roa (Down to about 60-40 against the Ingrams according to our latest rumours) but his performance over the last two weeks will have done him no harm at all.

By contrast, Mr. George seems to be consolidating his hold over his own seat. It may be this which explains a new-found calm and poise about his Parliamentary image.

Any dignity and quiet patience from government last week seemed to come from a new-sounding Mr. George. Producing one or two slick one liners when needed, the Foreign Affairs Minister resisted getting involved in the no-win in-fighting he has indulged in previously. He emerged with greater stature.

To this extent, if the opposition have embarked on an ignore Norman approach, it is backfiring as a posture of Ministerial aloofness is right up Mr. George's alley at present.

The Matepi-George



Hon. Norman George
Min. Foreign Affairs
(Areora/Ng./Tengat.)

duo is an interesting one for Parliament watchers.



Silk and Boyd's long-serving inter-islander "MANUVAI"—focus, along with its sister ship, of the Shipping Report which occupied many hours of Parliamentary debate last week.

Adding in Mitiaro, they offer between them a minimum bloc (with their close colleagues) of 5 seats as against the Henry-Ingram 8 and the North's 3. Veery interesting, folks!

Brief unflattering appearances were made by other members of government, who, like the Minister of Health on his recent trip to Takutea, appeared to spend the week bouncing off rocks of confusion between long spells lost in troughs of incomprehension.

They would probably fared better to have imitated Madame Desfarges and carried on knitting while waiting for the guillotine to drop.

It fell with appalling regularity until even the most innocent little bills were being deemed treacherously fit for instant decapitation.

And all the while, the opposition did not just make a meal of a week of government discomfort. They stuffed themselves like gluttons.

Not that seven-ninths of the opposition had any real cause for self-congratulation.

They were just lucky. Their luck lay in

being on the same side of the floor as star second lead, Mr. Henry and the week's glittering mega-talker Mr. Ingram.

Mr. Henry had some good moments, particularly during the debate on the Shipping Report. Mr. Henry's insistence can sometimes appear dour and humourless, however. Like Sir Thomas, he has a tendency to lecture when he knows he is right. Unlike Sir Thomas, he has wit to offer. But too often it turns to sarcasm. Mr. Henry, the radio suggests, is capable of hurting for real.

PERFORMANCE

What the radio filtered out were the warm tones of a com passionate leader.

Left was a certain cold efficiency at best and, at worst, the persistent nagging of a bad-tempered wife prepared to wait up all night, if necessary, in order to get an explanation from her profligate husband.

Mr. Henry was alert, efficient and as linguistically agile as usual, but did not thrill and offered no vision beyond the immediate destruction

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

(Ctd...from Page 4)

of personalities on the other side.

What, when all is said and done, one asks, does he stand FOR.

Knocking off three quarters of the Government side last week was like shooting blind men at siesta time. There were hours to spare to indicate what they were to be replaced with...

Greater efficiency, better management?

All right...but how? With what methods? On what basis?

Government are extremely lucky that the CIP's so far offer "more of the same" with different individuals handing out the largesse.

Mr. Henry's task (made harder by his absence one night and merciless ensuing counter-fire from Mr. Matepi) is not merely to attack but to suggest an alternative. With no known party platform other than a willingness to deal with the Ingramites his offer to the voter is no more than a change of faces on the ministerial benches.

PERFORMANCE

This impression was aided by the performances of Mr. Akaruru and Mr. Puna, his own "heavies".

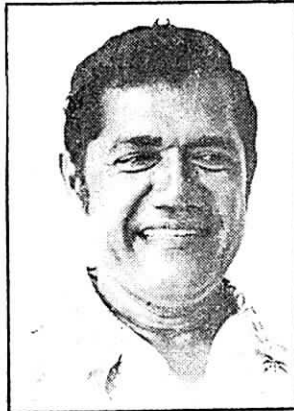
Both of them reverted to the parish pump for ideas.

They should have had a veritable banquet at the expense of government in their specialist areas of energy and education.

Apart from question time in which ill-researched opposition let government off with tame responses, they preferred to restrict national vision to issues that remain firmly locked inside the

Pukapuka and Aitutaki reefs.

Mr. Puna's re-iteration of his support for "sacked" CIG may or may not be legitimate and may or may not achieve its prime objective of blackening Coalition Aitutakian Bill Paiti's face back home...but what it does do for the rest of the country is make sure that we all know the knives will be out once the CIP get back in power.



Inatio Akaruru
Opposition Deputy Leader.
(Pukapuka)

Mr. Akaruru's contribution was similar in so far as it appears that the level of excessive patronage Mr. George is accused of handing out to Atiu would be all right if it was going to Pukapuka.

Only Mr. Tairea consistently offers national vision among Mr. Henry's team but what he offers is long on rhetoric and short of specifics.

And so, all in all, it could have been a fairly depressing week of Parliamentary listening had it not been for the controversial Mr. Ingram.

The Government gave the impression that they didn't really want to debate things publically and were keen to get off (overseas?) for Christmas. The opposition seemed more anxious to score personal



Hon. Geoffrey Henry
Leader of Opposition
(Takuvaie)

points with voters back home than inspire us with national alternatives. But Mr. Ingram was ready to give us a taste of informed and powerful leadership.

Mr. Ingram's style has always been one to guarantee entertainment.

In this session of Parliament, his grasp of a huge range of issues, his relentless probing into the factual basis of an argument, his willingness to concede points to others all delivered with a spare and fluent style was incisive political leadership and something the house has long lacked.

Only when he strayed (presumably for his Oneroan supporters' sake - who are very highly placed one hears!) into village affairs in Mangaia did he let down his guard and allow an indignant Mr. Matepi the chance to get in close enough to get in a few light body blows! Otherwise the week, and the whole session so far, went to Mr. Ingram.



Vincent Ingram
Leader Democratic Party Opposition
(Nikao/Panama)

A "Big Four" has emerged over the three weeks of the new Parliamentary line-up....Mr.

George and Mr. Matepi for Government and Mr. Henry and Mr. Ingram for the joint opposition.

Avid short wave radio politicians can currently judge the performance of them and the whole house against that of the "mother of Parliaments" in Westminster.

Far noisier and ill-mannered than our own gentlemanly House, the British version is characterised by regular inspirational rhetoric from both sides against a background



Hon. Dr. Pupu Robati - Prime Minister
(Rakahanga)

of rapid fire facts at Ministerial and opposition fingertips.

Our big Four last week, especially Mr. Ingram, were as good as anything on offer in Westminster.

Unfortunately, the impression left by their colleagues (the highest paid public officials in the land) was that maybe they would do better standing for the new Mayoral positions back in the villages where character assassination is the highest level of debate and the need for a front-end leader to clear cousin Nga's section down the road is of burning strategic importance.

December 14 1987

PARLIAMENT FAR FROM PERFECT

Business during the last week began with an acrimonious and lengthy discussion of the Shipping Report

Government, especially PM Pūpuke Robati (Rakahanga) and fellow Copra Board representative Ben Toma (Manihiki), were placed on the defensive from the outset. The opposition succeeded in bringing into question the activities of the Copra Board relating to the purchase of the notorious ("rust bucket" said one member) TIMO, apparently purchased by Copra Board members Toma and lawyer Reuben Tylor and rumoured to be currently inoperative and languishing in Tauranga (NZ) harbour. Government eventually guillotined debate after suffering setbacks from which they did not recover all week.

Private members' questions on EPS and Education did not rock government as much as expected and inadequate knowledge of the various facts involved allowed government to escape in a cloud of generalities.

The earlier government proposal to give the Speaker of the House about four times the salary of an average wage worker for an incalculable loss of hours at work spoke wonders for members' disclaimer that they were engaged in massive polarisation of Cook Islands society. In similar fashion, the ministerial 'backbenchers' (there is no one currently without some sort of portfolio!) speeches in the Planning and Economic Development Bill gave alarming indications that they do, indeed, see "development" as day-to-day appropriation of infrastructural "goodies" for the village.

Predictable "knee-jerk" responses were produced in the Local Government debate as members vied with each other in obeisance to the biggest single monumental millstone around the neck of people's development - the involvement of "traditional and customary" leaders in the administration of complex socio-economic issues.

BEST INVESTIGATIVE PERFORMANCE
-Mr. Henry on the TIMO affair.

BEST MINISTERIAL WEEK
-Mr. Matepi on a wide range of issues in a variety of styles.

BEST GOVERNMENT 'RESCUE'
-Mr. George on the need for the guillotine

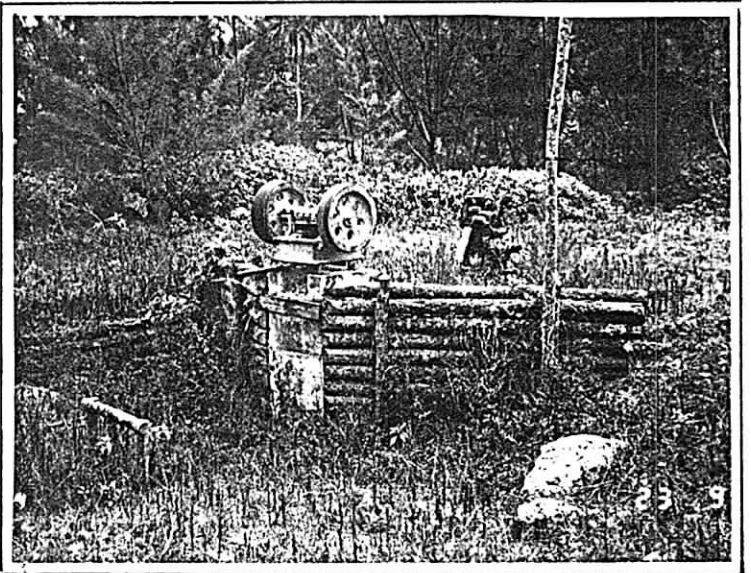
BEST SPEECH OF THE WEEK
-Mr. Ingram on Economic Development (covering investment priorities, French Loan money, development Bank policy etc...plus the exposure, by destruction of Mr. Teaurima, of government backbenchers' understanding of national development and social services ("more mowers needed in education"!!!)

BEST LINE OF THE WEEK
-Mr. Matepi "I have no time to take a bath, I am working so hard for the country!"

Comment

POLITICS

It's not what you do



it's the

WHY

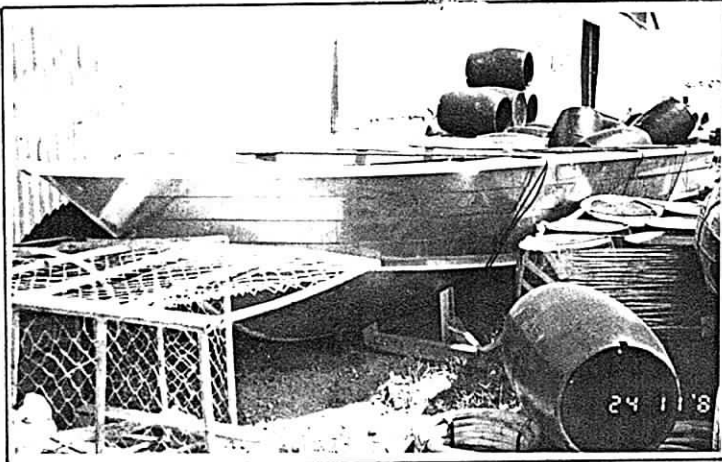
that you do it

Perhaps the saddest feature of a week in which many members' grasp of issues left much to be desired was the lack of understanding of the basic international theory of development. Development is NOT the infrastructural item or the manpower expert for its/his/her own sake...it's what results from their existence amongst us that is/isn't Development. (e.g. the discarded crusher ABOVE).

(DISCUSSION CONTINUED ON PAGE 7)

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

POLITICS



A pretty boat and some pretty things to go with it "got" by Rev Bill Marsters. In regional Development theory they remain pretty "things" until they are converted into sustainable cash, sustained employment

There is only one over-riding issue. Economic Development.

The basic misunderstanding (deliberate or otherwise) offered the people by backbench MP's on both sides of the House is a brake upon Economic Development in the real sense.

The focus is on infrastructural "items" allegedly "got" by the member. It may satisfy the short term values of Cousin Metu and the mamas. It damages the country as a whole.

"We need more mowers" says the Assistant Minister of Education!

Not really! We need from the Assistant Minister a return to the development policy structure we once had. The mowers can be left to the school committee.

"Raymond 'got' us this....Jim brought us that...Norman 'gave' us these..." et cetera.

Raymond, Jim, Norman...or Inatio, Maere Dan etc..certainly did nothing of the sort.

What Raymond, Jim etc are doing are dismantling a fairly satisfactory developmental structure in terms of administration.

That structure is one of the strong achievements of self-government.

It involves the people, the Island Councils, the Public

Rev. Bill Marsters (Chairman Palmerston Island Development Committee)...a one-man aid obtainer!



Rev Bill Marsters "aboard" his latest for the people of Palmerston. Bill got a lot of such things from his 1987 trip to NZ and a variety of embassies. If this is what Development is all about, Bill comes a lot cheaper than a professional Member of Parliament! The latter justify their existence in direct proportion to their grasp of economic planning options NOT as post Stone Age, hunters and gatherers!

A "houseful" of Bill Marsters is disastrous. The need to control their well-meaning forays and their predilection for doing the Island Council's allotted role, is perhaps

this situation with an articulate defence of Outer Islands development needs. The alternative, more formal approach to planning, they argue will leave the O. Is. at the mercy of Rarotongan development and thus cripplingly dependent.

The rest do not appear to be interested in ideology. Just elbowing their way to the front of the lolly scramble.

As was revealed in the Validation Bill debate, government appear to have little idea, either of what role they are to play in the area of revenues, most of which appear to have come along

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development

Service and the donors operating at each level within a framework of planned government objectives.

It has been replaced by several MP's and has become short term political patronage.

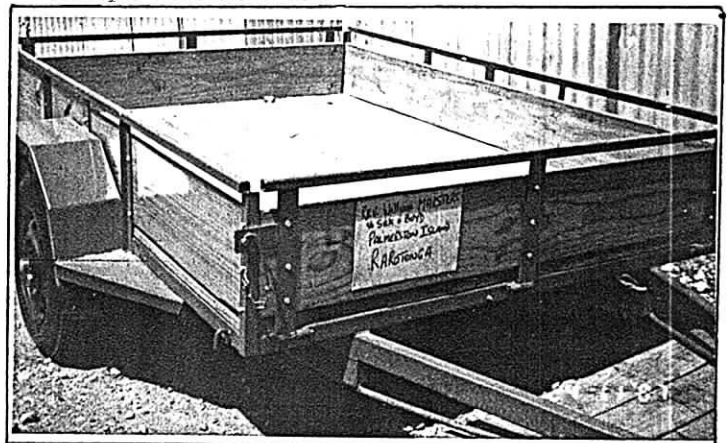
Such attitudes do away with the prime responsibility of government.

No one in government, under that system, has any stake in or duty to say "no" to more and more spending. Government ceases to steer the economy and individual members exist as so many Rev Bill Marsters who recently (and very successfully) marched off to several embassies to grab whatever was going for "his" island (and sooner or later, government will start being required to foot several associated bills, presumably.)

the prime reason why party discipline is useful.

Our coalition has no mandate from anyone and no party platform. It has only the interests of its members and those in their communities who support them at heart.

Mr George and Mr. Macepi rationalise



Yet another pretty thing! A trained Development economist could offer a fairly reliable cash value to the island of Palmerston during its life. At a local level, this has been Bill Marsters own rationale for what he has brought back.

(Ctd...from Page 7)

"from time to time" as the government starts to run out of cash.

In short, all the traditional rules for economic development are being broken.

Cash limits are not being imposed on medium and short-term spending.

Demand-determined spending is treated on an ad hoc basis as long as funds last.

Unpredicted costs are automatically accommodated and the cash found by diversion or knifing into the social services.

Inflation figures are meaningless, manoeuvrable stats, which do not reflect the purchasing patterns of Cook Islanders or local circumstances.

Unemployment stats are likewise meaningless as we fly the unemployable out to NZ.

Hence, because of the NZ connection, we do not have to apply normal economic development management methods and can bowl along merrily in conditions which, in some fields, were plainly strike conditions in any independent nation.

The situation is a direct result of the initial policy of the Davis coalition.

It has been reported reliably to us that Sir Thomas' instructions to his "team" were to "get out there and show the people that we are working for them...not talking!"

If accurately reported, it is then no wonder that the Coalition Dr. Robati, Mr. George and Mr. Matepi took off him is landed with the very difficult task

of shifting the relentless high spenders among their ranks on to the high ground of formal budgetary estimates and controls before the country drowns in a flood of pre-election promises.

Otherwise, we might as well scrap the notion of Parliament and base our national economic development on the shoulders of paroch-

ial go-getters like Bill Marsters.

He has achieved a lot for Palmerston in terms of "presents" which may or may not be of use to "his" people.

Who cares? It creates the illusion of "development".

It makes people happy.

And it needs no per diems or tax-paid safari suits to get it done.

But, it isn't development and has little to do with economics.

One hopes that each family head may similarly turn up on Christmas Eve with a bag of presents for the family.

One hopes, too, that no one in the family will be in the least bit deceived into calling it "economic development".

ECONOMICS

Time To Get Serious

Politically, the country is generally considered to be in a period of instability.

Commercially, however, businessmen in Rarotonga offer widespread agreement that the climate is not only stable but supportive of continuing profitable expansion.

Leading local entrepreneur Brian Baudinet offers an explanation of the apparent contradiction.

"The business community is engaged in its own development," he explains, "and by and large this does not involve political considerations provided the basics in free enterprise situations are kept to."

These "basics" he describes as, "we in business pursue our various enterprises, government sets the tax rates

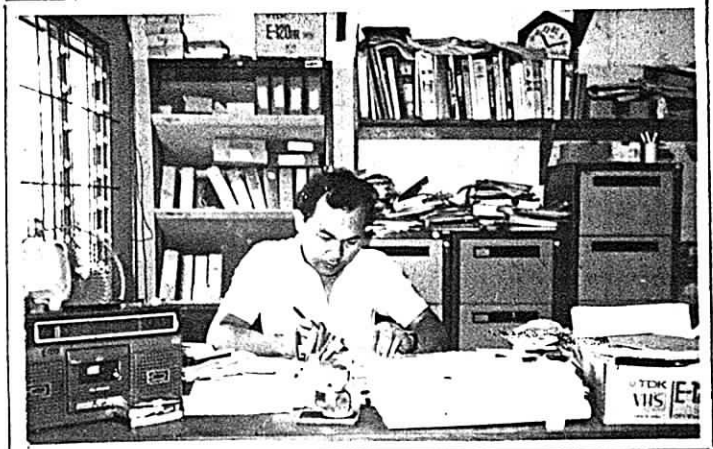
and supervises the distribution of the surplus."

Mr. Baudinet sees no reason for the private sector to be involved in the distribution process although "we have our individual ideas, of course."

When pressed for "individual ideas" he claims to detect a choice in political policy in the Cook Islands.

"It seems to me," he said, "that the political options are clear. You can either embark upon project development and put public investment funds into supporting such projects or you can hand out the surplus left after taxation into direct patronage such as basically non-productive jobs."

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 9)



Accounting at GSI... "the business community is engaged in its own development."

(Ctd..from Page 8)

"You can also do a bit of both, of course," he adds.

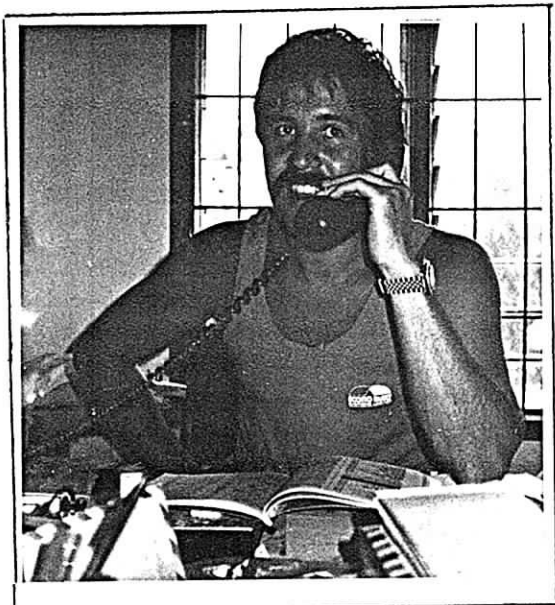
Mr. Baudinet recognises potential problems in either option.

"On the one hand, project development may be theoretically more desirable but involves long, slow hard work without immediate political reward. By contrast, job hand-outs and other direct payment is non-productive, saps initiative and is pretty disastrous all-round in the long run - but it can offer quick political gain."

is that the full manpower talent of the country is being frustrated. The initiative of many upper and middle level public servants appears blunted. I would like to see the genuinely experienced and talented Public Servant given his head to go ahead and plan and be productive.

Many of them tell me that they feel frustrated to be offering an inferior public service when they know themselves what the answers are and what steps must be taken. They don't appear to be permitted to do their job."

Several businessmen, though reluctant to be quoted see devel-



Brett Porter, one of the nation's up-and-coming younger generation of local entrepreneurs. "Good!" is how he briefly describes the current development climate.

The effects of non-productive patronage are not merely seen in the long term, claims another prominent Cook Islands commercial figure, tourism expert and Air Rarotonga boss Ewan Smith.

"I think it is easy to find a lot of frustrated people around," he claims.

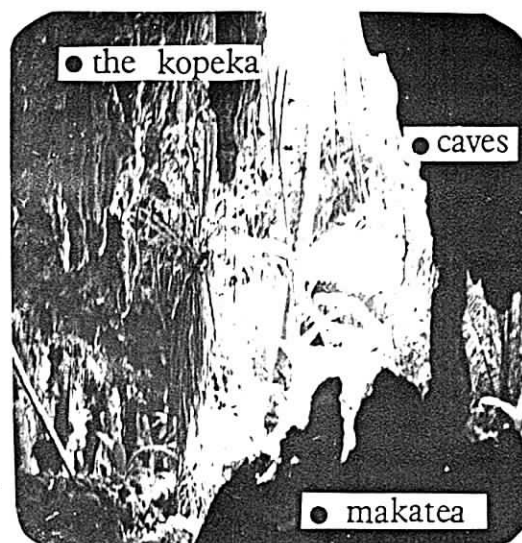
"Whether they are right to ascribe their feelings to national policy or not, I'm not sure but what many people are saying about economic development

opmental problems
such as these as a
reflection of politi-
cal unease and
"instability".

"It IS time to take a serious look at what is offered by way of public services," was a common summary from many with an additional note to the effect that commercial stability had been the result of letting talented people have their heads and produce



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LIVING

DEATH ON
THE REEF

Atiu families are inclined to treat scare stories about the poisonous qualities of reef fish with amused scepticism.

It used to be the same with asbestos miners. Nervous chuckles. Macho amusement. And, for want of any alternative to impending doom....the resignation of the fatalist.

When the continuing inability to furnish most of the week's protein needs by reef fishing or netting means the difference between eating and subsisting on bread and tea, there is little choice but to be fatalistic and carry on eating reef grazing fish in spite of Health Department bans and warnings.

The latest disastrous condition of the staple "maito" and "ku" as well as suspected problems with even deep water fish is a serious threat to Atiuan family life.

The "maito" has been officially ban-

ned from the table indefinitely by the Atiu Health Department. The "ku" and other grazers have been banned for at least the hot weather season.

In addition, warnings have been strongly issued against the local habit of not immediately cleaning out fish.

The Health Department and the CAO on Atiu have also made contact with Marine Resources officials in Rarotonga.

Finally, people have been ordered not to eat the much-favoured organs (liver, ovaries, intestines) and brains.

Especially suspect is one stretch of the Atiuan reef which has recently been the source of fish poisoning on the largest known scale ever in Atiu's medical history.

Fifteen serious cases arrived at the hospital last weekend and a dozen more milder cases were externally treated.

One case came within minutes

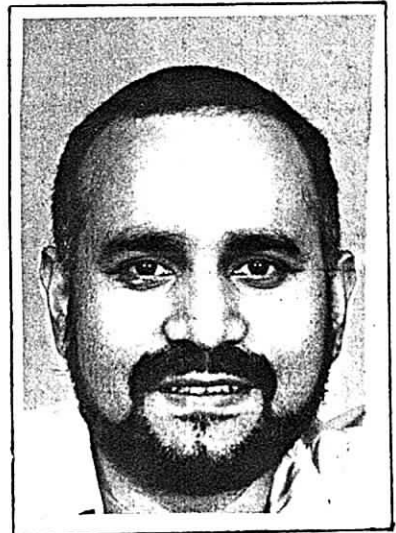
of death, reported hospital officials and prompt work by the doctor and hospital team saved a young man in his twenties who in one fit of diarrhoea lost two litres of water and emptied a drip in 15 minutes!

Although the worst outbreak ever of fish poisoning in recorded Atiu history, it is not the first major reef fish problem in Nga Pu Toru during the 1980's.

Three years ago, a similar outbreak of cases occurred in neighbouring Mitiaro leaving part of their reef unfishable.

Local fishermen report that in the past, from time to time, cases occur and identified fish are ignored for a while.

The extent of the current problem which had been growing in intensity over three months up to last weekend's



SURESH VATSYAYAN

catastrophic outbreak, had never been experienced before, say fishermen.

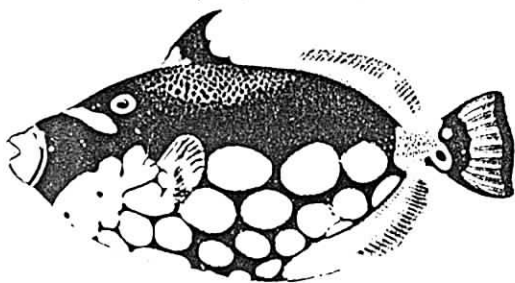
A local folklore has grown up around the increases in fish poisoning noted in the last decade.

Parts of it ascribe blame to NZ Army dumping during the 1977 harbour const-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

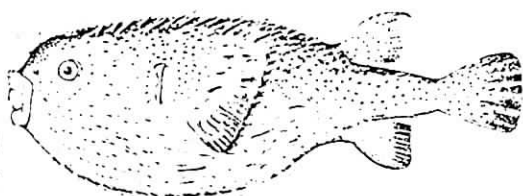
Fish Poisoning

(Ichthyosarcotoxism)



A Couple More "Baddies"...

ABOVE: Trigger Fish
BELOW: Porcupine Fish



'IA
ORANA



TERAI MANEA

TRADITIONAL CREATIVE ARTS
ATIU, THE COOK ISLANDS
(PROP. terupe kelly putiare)

terai manea

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

ruption or to disturbances in reef ecology caused by blasting at the time.

Others go deeper and further.

They call upon memory in a claim that things have been getting worse over the last twenty years since the start of widespread toxic dumping in the Pacific and, of course, the establishment of the CEP bases in French Polynesia.

Adding local weight to this theory are claims that the lagoon surrounding the military base atoll of Hao is not permitted to be fished.

We asked Dr. Suresh Vatsyayann of the Health Department to discuss the recent cases with us:

JOURNAL: What are your first thoughts on the cause of this outbreak of fish poisoning.

SV: I can speak only on the purely medical aspects. You need a marine biologist for the rest.

J: On the medical aspects, then.

SV: Ordinary food poisoning is infective. This fish poisoning is toxic. The poison is highly concentrated and will be most concentrated in the fish liver first then the eggs and ovaries.

J: How does it occur?

SV: There is a well-known phenomenon in the Indian Ocean and parts of the Pacific called the "red tide". A high proportion of micro-plants called dinoflagellates appear on the reef. They are toxic and are ingested by fish grazing on the reef.

J: Which fish?

SV: All of them. Even the popular parrot. But especially here, it seems the "maito".

J: What about deep sea fish?

SV: They are less of a danger. Though, as they eat the smaller reef fish, they too can be a problem. For that reason, no one should eat fish organs.

J: Does cooking help?

SV: Not at all. Cooking doesn't kill the toxin.

J: What are the symptoms?

SV: Pretty immediate. Sometimes it is more nervous tingling. In other cases there is partial paralysis and respiratory problems.

J: What about these recent cases?

SV: They have been very serious. 6 have been on drip and could have died without the presence of IV fluids, drips and trained staff. The normal time for the onset of symptoms is anywhere from 1/2 hour to 8 hours. Some of the latest cases occurred within 15 minutes of eating.

J: Have you any theory of the cause.

SV: Let me say, there must be complete research by a marine biologist. The signs are typical of ciguatera.

J: And the growing volume of local folklore?

SV: Interesting. But I am inclined to think that some form of ecological imbalance has been created on the reef. Maybe during these very hot times of "red tide" certain edible plants are killed off on an exposed bare reef or maybe dinoflagellates propagate more under such conditions. Research is obviously needed.

J: What about the suggestions of toxic waste dumping and nuclear testing being part of it all? Fantasy?

SV: I wouldn't say that. Some ecological problem may well exist and who knows what could cause it? What is certain though is that folklore claiming things are washed to our shores and cause

fish poisoning is NOT the case. The poisoning is caused by the micro-plants... We know that much. But, the dumping and testing could be the cause of deep-seated ecological disturbance.

EVERY WEEK

Super LOOK

Our apologies to Top Ten Fans. Owing to postal failures we are unable to publish this week.

The 1987 Atiu College "Dux" (top senior academic student) is 12 years old!

The award was revealed to an astonished audience of parents and dignitaries at the December 4 Annual Prize Giving attended by Foreign Affairs Minister and MP for Arecora/Atiu, the Hon. Norman George.

12 year old Joy Vatsyayann, daughter of UNIV Dr. & Mrs Suresh Vatsyayann covered her Form 3 and 4 courses in Atiu and her

native India before launching herself upon this year's Upper 5th. NZSC examination in English, Maths,



JOY VATSYAYANN

(Continued on Page 12)

♪

A MERRY CHRISTMAS

from

RADIO

♪

IKURANGI

Rugby 100-up!



(by Owen Lewis)

Many saw it as a "farce". Some considered it "downgraded" NZ rugby, "world champion" rugby. Finally, there were those who saw the late 1987 All-Black tour of Japan as merely a political and economic promotional tour.

Scores in the "Test" matches gave weight to these criticisms.

They were very one-sided.

The 1st Test was won by the All-Blacks 74-0.

In the process, winger John Kirwan reached cult hero status among Japanese TV viewers with powerful all-round play and with penetrating runs of up to 60 metres on at least four occasions!

This, in itself,

could point to the tour being a "farce".

In the second international the feeling was even stronger as the gap between the two teams stretched to 106-4.

The highlight of the game was probably, for many, Japan's first ever home try against the All-Blacks!

So one-sided was the game that only two out of a reported 70 photographers stationed themselves at the Japanese try area and were thus able to capture winger Minoru Okidoi's historic try nine minutes after half time!

On the political and economic front, however, the tour no doubt gave great satisfaction to the NZ Minister of Trade and Tourism.

Tour advertising tended to suggest a hook-up with the NZ Meat Industry, all of which may have been good capital for the NZRFU.

Such tours, though, have their supporters and generally it was the pro-tour supporters who had the final say.

Good touring experience was provided

for young players and the tour will prove invaluable in developing the test players NZ will be calling on in 1988.

Further, it gave a good start to an inventive coaching duo, John Hart and Alex Wyllie.

And, seriously, the boost given to the NZ lamb trade cannot be overlooked economically.

But, perhaps most important of all, the much criticised "farce" more than justified itself through the enormous stimulus it undoubtedly gave the development of rugby in Japan.



Two of the new generation of All-Blacks who profited from the Japanese experience... ABOVE: Halfback Bruce Deans and TOP: Hooker John Buchan (both Canterbury)

dux

Science, Biology and Geography.

Certainly the youngest ever CIs. student to take NZSC, Joy topped the 1987 internal exams in Atiu ahead of second placed Nga Tanga.

Highlight of the well attended evening was the presentation by Minis-

ter George of the inaugural George trophy.

The Trophy, the top award in the school is presented by the George family to the most outstanding all-round student of the year.

The first winner of the trophy was 17 year old Helen Mokoroa of Teenui.

(Continued from Page 11)

THE WEALTH OF NATIONS

Volunteers' Day was celebrated with the rest of the world in great style on Atiu.

The celebration combined with several events staged by the govt. Health Department, led by UN Volunteer Purnash Vatsyana.

Also representing UN was Estarr Camacho of the Agriculture Department whilst Margrit Krieger of UN represented the 30 year old

VSA Volunteer organisation.

In between presentations to winners of the Health Department's Baby of the Year Show and the award of certificates to successful volunteer participants in the 1987 Public Health Training Programme, addresses were given by Minister Norman George and Director General of Health Dr. Tamarua.

(NEXT WEEK..full photo coverage of the big event and of Volunteers' Day).

Open to all

AML



AFTER WORK
WEEK-ENDS
TONIGHT

WELCOME



VERA

NEW!



"to all well-regulated families
The Spectator, No. 10, Monday, March 12, 1711



THE SATIRICAL WEEKLY OF THE PACIFIC

13

Tuesday Evening

December

Takutea

PARLIAMENT

-Angry outburst during House debate.....

"NOT YOYOS —NOT US"

Indignation rocked the House last week, as fiery Minister of Education, Matepi Matepi (Oneroa) strongly denied that he was a yo-yo.

The accusation was levelled at Minister Matepi and others by forthright Opposition Leader G.A. Henry (Takuvaime).

Parliamentary sources have revealed that the violent response by the Mangaian Minister was followed by a concerted rush upon the House library by angry government members.

"I thought a voyo was merely some kind of po-offtah," said one, "but Matepi seems to consider it quite serious."

Parliamentary staff explained to anxious members that a yoyo was a childish toy on a string which went up and down according to the whim of whoever controlled it.

Members are reported to have been satisfied with this explanation and returned to their seats wondering



what all the fuss was about.

Following advice from Mr. Speaker, the term "yoyo" was deemed unparliamentary.

An opposition source reports that "corrupt old buggers" was considered as an alternative but was rejected after discussion.

A VERA public opinion poll taken within minutes of the in-House uproar indicated that, whereas "corrupt old buggers" met with a 84.76% approval rate, most people reckoned "yoyos" would do O.K. for the moment.

OPINION

"DO YOU RECKON MP'S ARE A PACK OF YOYOS?"

- Public Responses -	Rough old Percentages
Of course	93
I need a housing loan	14%
I'm a Rakahangan, but yes.	50%
Unless I get a trip soon.	63.2%

VANUATU

Lini lives

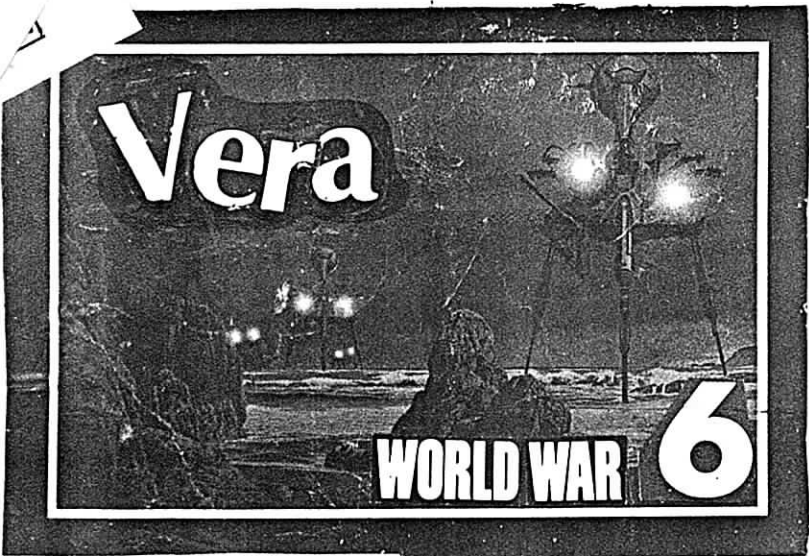
Secretary General of the ruling Vanua'aku Party of Vanuatu, Mr. Barak Sope denied last week that his unsuccessful bid for Party leadership constituted an inglorious and power-mad assault on Fr. Walter Lini, first PM of the country and currently paralytically hanging on to office.

One of the many ex-socialists at present travelling the globe on behalf of the non-travelling reserves back home, Fr. Lini had a stroke on his last trip to Washington.

"We thought the old boy was dead", noted a close source.

Lini stoutly denied this at a party meeting which gave him the benefit of the doubt and voted him back in.

Demands by Sope supporters that Lini prove himself alive were vetoed.



THAT'S WHAT YOU SAY

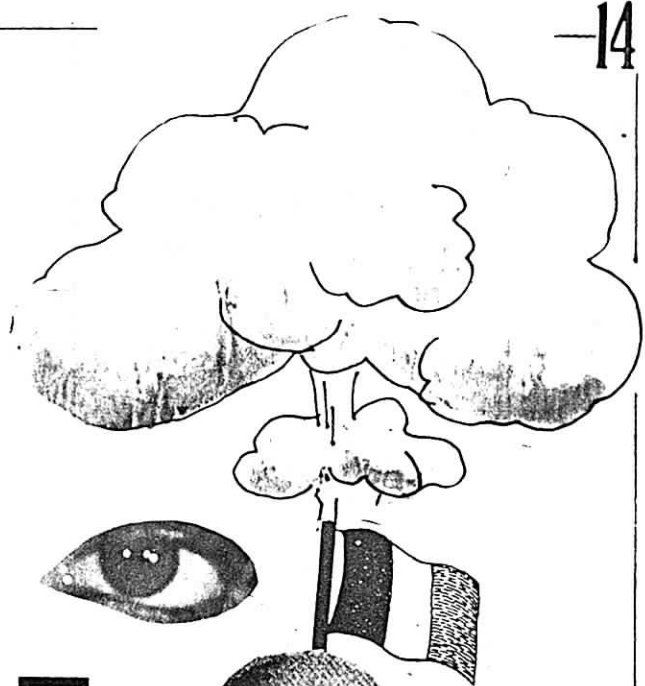
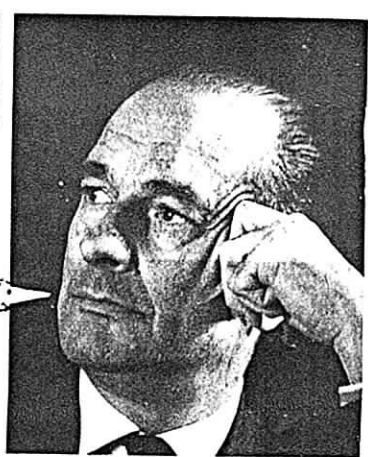


Tell me Tom, what's that joker got behind me in his violin case?

TRADE

2 Marginals, 3 Associate Ministers, Assorted Public Servants
any offer considered
Ph. upstairs in working hours (1/2 past ten to eleven o'clock every other Friday)

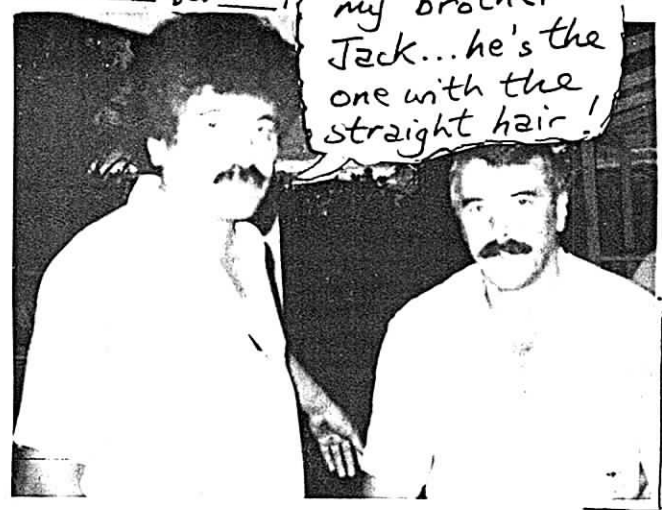
What 13 million, Doctor?



Le French View **UP VOUS**
OFFICIEL

JE is most touched par les overwhelming numero of letters agreeing avec moi about le appalling threat to le world peace offered par le ghastly Ray Gun et son nouveau poofstah commie compagnon le frighful Goebellschap. Un world minus le imminent threat of le total annihilation et le descent of le atrocious nuclear hiver est un world le Mighty Frog Empire peut do without, mes amis. Such un world would be totalement at le mercy of les execrable Greenpieces et les troublemaking tansvestites like le notorious Jean Mary Teabags and son kanak hordes. Je proposes once again to drop un tres enormous one tres soon as un gesture on le part of le Empire to demonstrate unce et pour all that nous shall pas take lightly un threat to le world as nous tous le best. F. knows it.

May I present my brother Jack... he's the one with the straight hair!



Wanted

Authorities are anxious to trace the whereabouts of notorious emigre activist Count Heissmiks von der Fail (rechts).

The internationally sought micro-guerilla is rumoured to be the mastermind behind FLNKS (The Fanatical Lot of Notable Kiwi Soaks), an aboveground movement dedicated to the overthrow of Brandi's bar stools, cocktail glasses and consenting 16 year olds.

Von der Fail is believed to be the last standing remnant of a long line of Heissmiks dating back to the distant origins of Kiwi aristocracy in 1954.

He is linked by a series of morganatic liaisons with other dangerous elements of the resurgent Kiwi royalist movement such as fellow micro-activist Count von Smitt, the midget mogul, Count Rossi, a debauched arc-welder, Count Beau de Nez a.k.a. the Hong Kong Pirate, Count Michel



Count Heissmiks von der Fail...plotting.

le Fixeur, former Grand Vizier to the Court of the late King Tom, Count Porteur de Pas un Fixed Abode, von Vichmann and von Ellis, the notorious brown Counts, Count Blinkhorn, a British Spy, and the seductively alluring Countess Doris, the Mata Hari of Panama.

The conspirators are reported to be due to hatch another devilish plot at the Royalist HQ in downtown Avatiu managed by Jack le Cooper, who is not in the least bit aristocratic by the end of an average conspiracy.

Sixty minutes with the horniest ladies on video!

PREVIEW CATALOGUE VIDEO

Featuring sneak previews of the hottest ladies on adult video -

THE TAKUTEA MAMAS!!!!

ORDER NOW! and receive absolutely free a genuine hand-sewn Passionate Pareu to wrap around afterwards PLUS...

A loveable inflatable 5' 1" 17 stone circular Mama guaranteed genuine with a women's federation stamp of approval.

AND: A free pack of Kikau Kongoms.

(Overseas Aids welcome)



Star Guide

ARIES

THE RAM: Stop hanging around outside TJ's. Most of them are married.

TAURUS

THE BULL: You have a reputation for being ugly and boring. It is well-merited.

GEMINI

GEMINI: (The twins) Your twin is gossiping. *

CANCER

CANCER: Try changing to Consulate. It's a cooler, smoother death.

LEO

LEO: (The Lion): Stop kidding yourself and go back home to the missus and the video.

VIRGO

Be serious!

LIBRA

LIBRA: (The Scales) Calculate all your future options and make the next round a treble.

SCORPIO

SCORPIO: (The Scorpion) She'll still be there when you get home. Asleep in front of the video.

SAGITTARIUS

SAGITTARIUS: And that's what she'll look like.

CAPRICORN

CAPRICORN: (The Goat) See LEO.

AQUARIUS

AQUARIUS: (The Water Carrier) Your bed pan is ready, sir.

PISCES

PISCES: Don't worry about the burning sensation. Try penicillin and get back to the BC.

P/CE BRO'

VIDEO!

BREAKS ALL RULES

The long awaited "Ballmangler IV" was at last sent over to the Takutea Empire on Monday.

Featuring septuagenarian US lunatic Wong Wee Gan, extremely black belt exponent of the Nook Dem Ded school of Martial Arts and latest left-wing matinee idol Mick "Heil" Gobblechops, "Ballmangler IV" was billed as "solid family entertainment with an R2 rating" by the Empire management.

Sadly, this latest in the popular ongoing super-series is reported to have

been an unmitigated box office disaster.

The two stars spent most of the time gripping each other by the hand with neither looking capable of executing a respectable fall let alone a decent smash to the skull.

In an atrocious final scene on top of the Vietnam Memorial, the main characters all kissed each other and vowed to live in peace.

"Utterly sickening," cried those one year olds still awake at the close.

Fans and their mamas are believed to have burnt down the Empire in protest.

THE JOURNAL

& THE (Last) WORD



WORK OVERSEAS

Australian Ad Agency requires urgently a few dozen Maoris (lightish brown with full set of front teeth) as extras in forthcoming travel documentary for variety of SP Tourist Authorities. Bring own ukelele. Contact South Seas Docos

SPECIAL REPORT

Ram's Republic

Ageless old Melanesian electioneering expert, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara had a spring to his step as he re-entered the tastefully appointed PM's Office in Suva last week, according to on the spot reports.

"It's good to see the old place hasn't changed too much," he is said to have remarked, adding that he had been very worried at the thought of what state it might have been left by the Labour Party tenants he had temporarily let the suite out to earlier in the year.

Ratu Sir Kamisese chuckled characteristically as he reflected upon the enforced absence which had kept him out in the country for a while.

"Yes," he agreed, "it was one of the more complicated electoral appeals I have recently undertaken."



The six month long process, Ratu Mara referred to involved the removal of a variety of opponents ranging from the law courts, the Queen, the Commonwealth and the Fijian people.

"I always had faith, though," he mused, "even in those darkest hours on the dog-leg 12th when the unscrupulous powers of totalitarian democracy seemed hell-bent on consigning me to the electoral dustbin and even the Fijian people themselves were claiming they knew better than me who should rule them."

That faith, happily, was justified.

"I thank God I had faith in myself," he told our reporter

"It's a mark of a great leader," said a close associate, "to maintain faith in oneself when everyone else wants to kick you out."

He added, "It all goes to show how little faith one can put in people."

As a mark of respect to himself Ratu Sir Mara is said to be considering cancelling 1987.

In a late report, news has reached our Suva Office of the appointment of one T. Bavadra as ward assistant, Rotuma Hospital Clinic (Infectious Wing.)

SMASH HITS

THE WORLD'S TOP 10

1. LA BOMBE... (Los Frogs)

"The sound track from the award-winning doco of the same name featuring 68 year old Pacific Super-Star Gastric Floppe as Gamma Raise, the legendary 12 year old Mururoa mutant who became the first ever three-headed Polynesian to break into the charts.

2. SILENT KNIGHT.. (Tom & the Back-Benchers)

"A selection of old-time singalong favourites from the most boring group in the world including...

The Infrastructural Waltz; Travellin' Tight; Pack the Knife; The Wood Burner's Song; etc...

ARE YOU SEEKING A COMPATIBLE PARTNER?

Backbench World has been helping unattached ex-Prime Ministers find compatible new coalitions since they first invented voting. Our unique mail-order service eliminates the need for assignations between consenting politicians in the Post Office

toilet, out on the motu or behind the BC after sittings.

"The following comments testify to the integrity of our service..."

"The best coalition I've ever had" -ex backbencher Bangkok.

"My portfolios have never felt better" -Very Big Member.